

## Kshara Karma and Its Clinical Applications in Shalakyatantra - A Review

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**ABSTRACT :** *Anushastra* are para surgical procedures described in *Ayurveda* literatures apart from many surgical procedures. These procedures are separate from major *ashtavidha shastrakarma*. *Anushastra karma* is carried out in those conditions where *shastra karma* or surgery cannot be done and in some special conditions like children, sensitive patients. Out of 15 types of *anushastra* mentioned in classical texts of *Ayurveda*, *kshara karma*, *agnikarma* and *jalaaukavacharana* are being much important and currently used in many diseases. *Kshara* is a medicine obtained from ash of different plants. *Kshara* is best among *shastra* and *anushastras*. In *shalakyatantra*, surgical disorders are managed with these procedures with ease and comfort for both surgeon and patients. These procedures give optimum result and effective management of disorders such as *Upajihwa*, *Adhijiha*, *Upakusha*, and *Dantavaidharbha*, three types of *Rohini*, *Nasarsha*, *karnarsha* and *Paksmakopa*.

**Keywords:** *Anushastra*, *ashtavidha*, *Upajihwa*, *Adhijiha*, *Upakusha*

## **Aim**

To explore, evaluate and discuss the various basic concept of traditional para-surgical procedure *ksharakarma* used in *shalakyatantra*.

## **Material and methods**

The present conceptual study is focused on application of para surgical procedure kshara karma which is described as anushastra in ancient classical literatures in present era. All references of para surgical procedures are collected from and compiled from sushruta samhita and other ayurvedic scriptures, research papers and journals of Ayurveda.

## **Indications of para surgical procedures**

1. The condition is contra indicated for surgery.
2. The patient is an infant, child or very much fearful.
3. The surgical instrument is not available.
4. The treatment is possible without surgical instrument.
5. Introduction

## **What is Kshara**

Ayurveda depends largely upon the medicinal plants for the therapy. Shushruta mentions the one which does Kshanan and Ksharana called as kshara.[1] Kshara Karma, is known as Anushastra Karmas.[2] It has qualities like Chedana (Excision), Bhedana (Incision), Lekhana (Scraping).[3] 25 Kshariya Dravyas in Kshara Paka Vidhi Adhyaya has been mentioned, they are Kutaja, Palasha, Ashwakarna, Paribhadra, Bhibhitaki, Aragwada, Tilwaka, Arka, Snuhi, Apamarga, Patala, Naktamala, Vrusha, Kadali, Chitraka, Putika, Indravruksha, Aspota, Kanera, Saptaparna, Agnimantha, four types of Koshataki from which Kshara can be prepared.[4] Kshara can be multiple combinations of many herbs or may be from single drug. Kshara can also be used as internal medicine in different conditions.

## **Properties of kshara**

- Rasa- Katu
- Virya – Ushna

- Varna- Shukla
- Guna- Saumya, Teekshna, Agneya
- Doshghna – Tridoshaghna
- Karma – Dahana, Pachana, Darana, Vilayana, Shodhana, Ropana, Shohana

### **Qualities of kshara**

- According to different Acharya, kshara having different qualities mentioned in ayurvedic classics
- According to Charaka<sup>6</sup> – Teekshna, Ushna, Laghu, Rooksha, Kledi, Pakta, Vidaarana, Daahakaaraka, Depana, Chedana and Agniadrishya.
- According to Shuhruta and Vagbhata<sup>7</sup> – Na- atiteekshna, Na- atimridu, Na- atishukla, Slakshnatva, Picchila, Avishyanda, Sheeghrakaaritva, Shiva, Shikharee, Sukhanirvaapya.

### **Bad qualities of Kshara**

1. Kshara can possess some bad qualities apart from its good qualities, if it is prepared improperly. It is necessary to have a thorough knowledge of those bad qualities before treating the patient with Kshara.
2. Bad Qualities of Kshara Mentioned in Ayurvedic Classics[8]
3. Atimridu, Atishweta, Atiushnata, Atiteekshnata, Atipicchila, Ativisarpita, Atisandrata and Apakavata
4. Importance of kshara karma
5. Kshara karma is important among all the para surgical procedures, due to its advantage of destroying tridoshaja disorders by excision and scraping action, having liquefying property it destroys worm. It also destroys kapha and cures kushta (skin disease).

### **Types of Kshara**

Kshara is mainly of two types -

- I. PANEEYA KSHARA
- II. PRATISARNEEYA KSHARA.

## **Preparation of Kshara**

The use of Kshara starts with method of preparation because it's very difficult to rely on market preparation. So, surgeon must know how to prepare Pratisaraniya Kshara.

### **Pratisaraneeya Kshara** <sup>[9]</sup> :

Sushruta's maneuver seems to be ideal regarding the preparation of Pratisaraneeya Kshara. The physician who prepares the Kshara should have a clean bath early in the morning of Sharad Ritu (autumn season) in auspicious day. He should fast on that day and go the hills and look for such plants that are middle aged and free from insects. The Panchangas of plants should be collected, dried up and made into small pieces. Then these are burnt with lime stone. While burning the dispersed parts of the plants are kept with the help of Tilanala. When the ash cools down it should be separated from the residue of limestone and Bhasma Sharkara. The collected ash should be mixed well with six times of water or cow's urine, then filtered twenty one times in a big vessel through a piece of cloth. The residual portion is thrown away and the filtrate (Ksharo-Daka) should be kept on Mandagni and continuously stirred well until it reduces to 1/3rd. This is Mridu Kshara. From these eight Palas has to be taken and mixed with Shankhanabhi or Shukti to make Prativapa. In the meantime, heating should continue and Prativapa should be mixed. Care should be taken that it is not too liquid or too dried up. The solution thus obtained is known as Madhyama Kshara. The Madhyama Kshara should be heated up again by adding some medicinal plants such as Danti, Chitraka, Ativisha etc. with this thick solution obtained which is known as Teekshna Kshara.

## **Uses**

Eye diseases

It is effective in eye lid diseases like lagana, arshovartma, shushka arshas, varmarbuda, pakshakopa and upapakshma mala.

### **Different kshara is used in different disease**

- Lagana – Yavakshar, Tuttha, Gorochana, Pippali with honey
- Arsho vartma, Sushka arsha – Eranda beeja majja or Vibhitaki Kshara with honey
- Pakshmakopa and Upapakshma Mala – Gunja kshara mixed with honey

## **ENT diseases**

Ksharkarma is very useful in ENT diseases like Upajihwa, Adhijiha, Dantpuppataka, Upakusha, Dantavaidharbha, three types of Rohini, Nasarsha and karnarsha.

- Upajihwa – After lekhana karma, kshara can be applied
- Dantpuppataka – Five lavana and yavkshara mixed with honey
- Dantavaidharbha – After cleaning root of teeth with shastra , kshara can be applied

It's very useful in nasarsha etc.

## **Method of application of Kshara in Nasarsha**

### **Poorva Karma**

1. Patient should be examined thoroughly.
2. Explain the procedure of treatment to patient.
3. If needed investigations to be done.

### **Pradhana Karma**

1. Patient asked to be in supine position (Rose's position).
2. Local anesthetic spray (Lignocaine 10%) can be used.
3. Nasal track should be cleaned with sterile cotton.

Then Kshara will be applied for 30 seconds over the polyps and cleanse the area with nimbu rasa to neutralize the Kshara.

After cleansing with Nimbu Rasa appreciate the change in colour of polyp from pink to Pakwa Jambheera Phala.

### **Paschat Karma**

1. After Pradhana Karma check for bleeding over the Kshara applied area.
2. The anterior nasal pack with gauze piece soaked in Yastimadhu Taila can be kept as it does Vruna Ropana.

3. Internally Lakshmilasa Rasa, Triphala Guggulu and Gandaka Rasayana can be given.

### **Probable mode of action of Kshara karma**

Kshara has Shodhana, Ropana, Shoshana, Stambhan, Vilyana and Lekhana properties. Shodhana property helps in elimination or expulsion of unwanted and harmful substance from the wound. It helps in desquamation of sloughs (debridement) & draining of pus. Ropana property helps in healing of wound due to antiseptic action of Kshara. Shoshana property helps in drying up and absorption of mucus discharge that gets collected in ulcer bed promoting the granulation. Stambhan property of Kshara helps contraction of opposing edges of ulcer to promote healing and Vilyana property cause liquefaction and dissolving of localized unhealthy tissue. Hence by all these properties of Kshara, healing property becomes faster.

### **Contra indications of Kshara**

Kshara should not be used externally or internally in bleeding disease. Durbals (weak person), balaka (children), vridha (aged patients), bhirutva (cowards), fevers, subject of pitta dominant constitution. Eye disease except diseases of eyelids, in excessive cold, in rainy and summer season kshara should not be used.

### **Conclusion**

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned the indication of Kshara to treat many Shalakyas diseases like Upajihwa, Adhijihwa, Upakusha, Dantavaidharbha, three types of Rohini, Nasarsha, Karnarsha and some eyelid diseases like Pakshmakopa etc. which shows its importance in Shalakyatantra. This procedure is simple, very safe, effective and with minimal or no complications, unhazardous and easily acceptable by the patients. Kshara is useful as a medicine external in some of Urdwajatrugata diseases of different pH. Kshara is not indicated in children, weak persons etc. There is minimal interference in patient's routine work. Kshara has important role in medicine, surgical and para-surgical practice. Kshara Karma has been considered as a wealth and a strong weapon in Ayurvedic Pharmacopeia. The parasurgical methods which are described by our Acharyas are effective, easily practicable and can avoid the recurrence.

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